

IN THE DRAWINGS

Applicants respectfully request approval of the following drawing changes. Specifically, Figure 2 has been amended to include a reference number 30 identifying the engine rotor assembly described in paragraph [0014] for example. Applicants hereby submit a “Replacement Sheet” incorporating the changes to the Figures. No new matter has been added.

**Remarks**

The Office Action mailed August 26, 2005 has been carefully reviewed and the foregoing amendments have been made in consequence thereof.

Claims 1-6, and 8-20 are now pending in this application. Claims 1-6, 8, 9, 11, 13-17, and 19 stand rejected. Claim 7 has been canceled. Claims 7,10, 12, 18, and 20 stand objected to.

The objection to the drawings is respectfully traversed. Specifically, Figure 2 has been amended to include reference number 30 to identify the engine rotor assembly illustrated in Figure 2 and described in paragraph [0014] for example. Applicants hereby submit a "Replacement Sheet" incorporating the changes to the Figures. No new matter has been added. Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request the objections to the drawings be withdrawn.

The objection to the specification is respectfully traversed. Specifically, the title has been changed in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion, and paragraph [0014] has been amended to recite "variable stator vane assembly 44." As such, and for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request the objections to the specification be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 1-6, 8, 9, 11, 13-17, and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over Agram (U.S. Patent No. 6,129,512) is respectfully traversed.

Agram describes a vane assembly that includes an outer stator (1) and a row of vanes (2). Each vane includes an outer pivot (3) and an internal pivot (5) that is inserted into a bearing (6) retained in a connecting ring (7) extending circumferentially between vanes (2). Internal pivot (5) includes a trunnion (28) and a widened section (29). Trunnion (28) is inserted into a sleeve (27) defined within bearing (6) such that widened section (29) is between trunnion (28) and a blade (30) of vane (2). Widened section (29) includes a recess (34) defined therein. Recess (34) does not extend circumferentially, but rather, as described

at column 4, lines 2-5, “recess 34 advantageously lies only on a section of the circumference and finishes therefore in two lateral stopping surfaces 33 . . . .”

Claim 1 recites a method for assembling a variable vane assembly for a gas turbine engine including a casing and an inner shroud, wherein the method comprises “providing at least one variable vane including a radially inner spindle that includes a groove defined circumferentially therein that has at least one machined face . . . coupling the variable vane radially between the casing and the inner shroud such that at least a portion of the radially inner spindle is inserted at least partially through an opening extending radially through the inner shroud . . . .”

Agram does not describe nor suggest a method for assembling a variable vane assembly for a gas turbine engine, as is recited in Claim 1. More specifically, Agram does not describe nor suggest providing at least one variable vane including a radially inner spindle that includes a groove defined circumferentially therein that has at least one machined face. Rather, in contrast to the present invention, Agram describes a vane that includes an internal pivot that includes a recess defined therein, wherein the recess “advantageously lies **only on a section of the circumference**” of the internal pivot, as described at column 4, lines 2-5 of Agram. Accordingly, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Agram.

Claims 2-5 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 2-5 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 2-5 likewise are patentable over Agram.

Claim 7 was indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim. Claim 7 has been canceled and independent Claim 6 has been amended to include all of the limitations from Claim 7. Accordingly, Claim 6 is submitted to be patentable over Agram.

Claims 8, 9, 11, and 13 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 6. When the recitations of Claims 8, 9, 11, and 13 are considered in combination with the

recitations of Claim 6, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 8, 9, 11, and 13 likewise are patentable over Agram.

Claim 14 recites a gas turbine engine comprising “a variable vane assembly comprising at least one row of circumferentially spaced variable vanes and a retainer assembly . . . each said variable vane comprising a radially inner spindle configured to rotatably couple said vane within said gas turbine engine . . . each of said radially inner spindles comprises at least one groove defined therein and comprising at least one machined face . . . said at least one groove extends circumferentially within each of said radially inner spindles, said retainer assembly comprising at least one retainer for engaging each said spindle groove at least one machined face to securely couple each said variable vane within said gas turbine engine . . . .”

Agram does not describe nor suggest a gas turbine engine as is recited in Claim 14. More specifically, Agram does not describe nor suggest a variable vane including a radially inner spindle that includes at least one groove defined therein, wherein the at least one groove extends circumferentially around each radially inner spindle. Rather, in contrast to the present invention, Agram describes a vane that includes an internal pivot that includes a recess defined therein, wherein the recess “advantageously lies **only on a section of the circumference**” of the internal pivot, as described at column 4, lines 2-5 of Agram. Accordingly, Claim 14 is submitted to be patentable over Agram.

Claims 15-17, and 19 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 14. When the recitations of Claims 15-17, and 19 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 14, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 15-17 and 19 likewise are patentable over Agram.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request the Section 102 rejections of Claims 1-6, 8, 9, 11, 13-17, and 19 be withdrawn.

Claims 7, 10, 12, 18, and 20 were indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 7

has been canceled and independent Claim 6 has been amended to include all of the limitations of Claim 7. As such, Claim 6 is respectfully submitted to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 10 and 12 depend from Claim 6. When the recitations of Claims 10 and 12 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 6, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 10 and 12 likewise are in condition for allowance.

Claims 18 and 20 depend from independent Claim 14 which is submitted to be in condition for allowance. When the recitations of Claims 18 and 20 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 14, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 18 and 20 likewise are in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing remarks, all the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,



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